



SCREENING, SUPERVISION and TRAINING FOR NEW & EXISTING PERSONNEL POLICY

[Standard 4]

Rationale

- Carefully developed policies and procedures not only help to identify the most suitable persons to work with children in Northcote Primary School, they can also deter unsuitable persons from applying or being appointed, either in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Selecting suitable and appropriate people to work with children is vital. Everyone benefits when the best people, who also share Northcote Primary School's values about keeping children safe from harm, are chosen. If good care is taken during the recruitment phase, it is more likely that people who are unsuitable to work with children will be screened out. Good recruitment practices help to reduce the opportunities for harm to occur by deterring the 'wrong' people from applying.
- Northcote Primary School needs to be clear about the role and responsibilities of each position, particularly when they involve working closely with children.
- A job description or duty statement should include a clear outline of the role and also state the expectation that staff must provide a child safe environment. It should clearly spell out:
 - the organisational context
 - duties and tasks of the role
 - qualifications, experience and attributes a person must have the level of responsibility and supervision associated with the position
- A well-developed job description is more likely to attract suitably qualified staff and volunteers. When roles and responsibilities are unclear, unsuitable people are more likely to apply because the organisation may not look as professional and capable of identifying unsuitable applicants.

Purpose

- To ensure Northcote Primary School complies with the legislative requirements of MO 870.
- To ensure Northcote Primary School demonstrates its commitment to creating a child safe culture.
- To raise awareness of the importance of child safety with staff.
- To protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur.
- To ensure Northcote Primary School selects the best and most suitable staff for any position teaching or non-teaching.
- To ensure Northcote Primary School develops procedures and practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel and are compliant with the Child Safe Standard 4.
- To ensure the promotion of:
 - the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
 - the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - the safety of children with a disability

Implementation

- This policy is intended for School Leadership, other staff, visitors, volunteers and contractors.
- Northcote Primary School will ensure that newly recruited and existing staff, volunteers and visitors understand the importance of child safety, are aware of the relevant policies and procedures and are trained to minimise the risk of child abuse.

Recruitment - Screening

- Northcote Primary School will develop clear duty statements and job descriptions and ensure that appropriately qualified staff conduct interviews.
- Job advertisements will clearly state that Northcote Primary School is committed to child safety. This should be included in all advertisements, duty statements and other documents.

- Job advertisements will contain statements such as:
 - We are committed to excellence and to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children.
 - All applicants must have full registration from the Victorian Institute of Teaching and be four year trained.
 - Applicants must provide the names of three referees who can comment on previous experience in relation to the selection criteria.
 - A valid Working with Children Check and a criminal record check is mandatory.
 - We are a child safe and equal employment opportunity employer.
 - Applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and from people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are encouraged.
- Referee checks will be carried out.
- Northcote Primary School will ensure decision-making is rigorous, defensible and transparent.
- Northcote Primary School is aware of the requirements of privacy legislation and laws relating to unlawful discrimination.
- Applicants will be told what will happen to any information they provide and who will have access to the information.
- Selection processes will be fair and just; however, the safety and wellbeing of children will be the primary consideration.
- During the interview process, applicants will be informed that a Working with Children Check and a criminal record check will be undertaken.
- For further information on avoiding charges of discrimination on the basis of a criminal record, Northcote Primary School will refer to The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's publication " *On the Record: Guidelines for the Prevention of Discrimination in Employment on the Basis of Criminal Record* .
- Notwithstanding any of the above, Northcote Primary School will adhere to the recruitment requirements as described in DET's Recruitment Guide, July 18 2016.

Post-Employment Supervision and Ongoing Training

- Northcote Primary School has in place a rigorous professional learning program for all staff.
- New staff are provided with information about matters such as the philosophy, vision, mission and values of Northcote Primary School, curriculum, students with medical conditions, school polices, OH&S and routine matters e.g. yard duty requirements.
- Graduate teachers are provided with additional induction opportunities generally over several school terms, including strategies to enhance teaching and learning.
- Mentoring, coaching and in-house training strategies are used for all staff.
- All staff must have a Professional Learning Plan based on Northcote Primary School's Professional Learning Plan which is linked to Northcote Primary School Strategic Plan.
- Leadership development opportunities are a key component of Northcote Primary School's professional learning program for senior staff.
- There is a significant budget allocation made for professional learning.
- Northcote Primary School is developing a formal induction program for volunteers, external providers (and contractors) to ensure they have appropriate information about the child safe culture of Northcote Primary School.

Northcote Primary School regularly will provide information, training and education for School Council, staff and volunteers about child safety on a needs basis, including:

- what child abuse is
- how to identify and reduce child abuse risks
- understanding and appreciating Aboriginal culture and other cultures and languages they may engage with in their role
- the importance of ensuring culturally safe environments for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and how to promote this
- the importance of ensuring safe environments for children with a disability, and how to promote this

- what constitutes inappropriate behaviour between children, such as inappropriate sexualised play, bullying and fighting
 - what is inappropriate behaviour between children and adults, with reference to the Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Northcote Primary School will support staff to build resilience and cope with child abuse incidences
 - As part of the process, Northcote Primary School will monitor the currency of all Working with Children Checks and advise staff, volunteers and external providers two months before the expiration date. For specific detail, please refer also to Northcote Primary School's *Procedures for Verifying & Recording Working with Children (Suitability) Checks and VIT Registration Policy*.

Evaluation

- *This policy will be reviewed every two years as part of the VRQA requirements, if an incident occurs or if guidelines change (latest PROTECT update 11 April 2018).*

NPS School Council ratified this policy on the 5th December 2018

References:

Creating a Child Safe Organisation Guide

Child Safe Standards Toolkit

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/Principals/spag/safety/Pages/chilsafestandards.aspx

and

Protect – Identifying All Forms of Child Abuse in Victorian Schools April 2018

www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/child safe